

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 8 and 9 have been amended, and claim 12 has been cancelled. Support for the amendments of claims 8 and 9 is provided at least in Figs. 2 and 3 and canceled claim 12.

Claims 8-10 were rejected, under 35 USC § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Knapp (US 6,880,467) in view of Blom et al. (US 4,013,244). Claim 11 was rejected, under 35 USC § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Knapp in view of Blom and Christiansen et al. (US 002/0181055). Claim 12 was rejected, under 35 USC § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Knapp in view of Blom, Hannan et al. (US 3,371,232), and Horblin (US 4,216,520). To the extent these rejections may be deemed applicable to the amended claims, the Applicants respectfully traverse based on the points set forth below.

Claim 8 now defines a method for producing an optical link that locates a body moving at constant speed away from a locating device. According to this method, once the moving body has departed, a capacitor is successively charged with pulses, whose durations are a linearly increasing function of time, and the capacitor is discharged through an emitter to produce laser pulses. The claimed subject matter supports reducing ocular damage to humans, who may come in contact with the laser pulses, while still producing an efficient optical link (see specification page 1, lines 18-28).

Knapp and Blom disclose illuminating a target so as to guide a missile towards the target. By contrast, the claimed invention locates a moving object (e.g., missile) but not the target of the moving object.

The Office Action proposes that Knapp discloses a delay timer that delays the emission of laser pulses until a moving body has departed (see Office Action section 2, lines 9-10).

However, Knapp discloses that timer 32 is intended to conserve electric power and prevent detection of a gun's location by hostile forces (see Knapp col. 3, lines 13-16). By contrast to Knapp's disclosure, the claimed delay of laser pulse emissions is intended to protect the eyes of humans who come into contact with the claimed laser pulses.

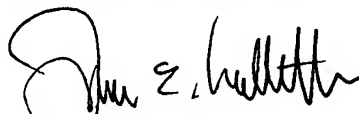
Hannan is cited in the Office Action for disclosing the production of successive laser pulses, and Horblin is cited for disclosing that the voltage on a capacitor is directly related to the width of a square wave charging pulse (see Office Action page 5, lines 1-5). The Applicants submit that Knapp, Blom, Hannan, and Horblin, considered alone or together, do not teach or suggest the present claimed subject matter wherein, once a moving body has departed, a capacitor is successively charged with pulses, whose durations are a linearly increasing function of time, and the capacitor is discharged through an emitter to produce laser pulses.

Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that Knapp, Blom, Hannan and Horblin, considered individually or in combination, do not render obvious the subject matter now defined by claim 8. Independent claim 9 similarly recites the above-mentioned subject matter distinguishing method claim 8 from the applied references, but with respect to an apparatus. Therefore, allowance of claims 8 and 9 and all claims dependent therefrom is deemed to be warranted.

In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance, and a notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

If any issues remain which may best be resolved through a telephone communication, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James E. Ledbetter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" being more prominent.

James E. Ledbetter

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JEL/DWW/att

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